**I just don't have time for a child'**

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MOTHERHOOD: It's not for everyone.

***Our readers have been debating the decision not to have children. Jayne Kerr says she's contributing to the world in other ways.***

I don't dislike children or consider myself a particularly selfish person. I'm just happy with my life the way it is.

I have a beautiful nephew who I love spending time with, but I've never felt 'clucky' and certainly not incomplete.

I think it is a mistake to assume that all women are maternal. I look around me and see a variety of friends and family members with completely different approaches to parenthood and varying levels of what I would describe as 'maternal instinct'. Some are clearly born to be great mothers while others should maybe have chosen differently.

Some unexpectedly became mothers and for most it was a blessing that changed their lives for the better, but for others it was far from a blessing, as I believe some people genuinely aren't suited to parenthood and it can inhibit them from fulfilling other equally meaningful ambitions.

I will use myself as an example. I have plans for my life that I just don't see a child fitting in to. My partner and I are both very career-focused people; I am working towards a masters degree while working full time and I hope to some day complete a PHD.

I am passionate about my job (I work in the medical science field) and want to contribute something back to this world through my career, not by reproducing. I am not undermining others' choices to give back to the world by becoming parents, I respect their choice, but I feel it is not for me.

My job is very demanding. In order to give my full self to my work plus find time for my partner, church, other family and friends, plus studies, I suppose I just don't have time for a child. I do shift work, I'm on call and I do overtime on a regular basis, it's hardly a child-friendly schedule.

I enjoy every second of my job and am not at all fussed by the fact that I don't have children to come home to at the end of a shift. I would feel more guilty having a child and then leaving them in someone else's care while I go off to work/get up in the middle of the night to answer an emergency call.

I think that as long as you are contributing something positive to the world, be it a child, a scientific discovery, an award winning novel or other such amazing feat, you are living your life the right way. If you can do all three, I salute you!

My only wish is that others would stop focusing on whether people have/don't have children as though it is the only worthwhile thing to do. There are so many other ways to contribute to the world and I only ask that people consider this before making a hurtful comment to someone who has made the choice to not have a child to pursue another dream.